

**SARGASSO SEA**  
COMMISSION

# ***The Sargasso Sea Commission***

***Dr. David Freestone  
Executive Secretary,  
Sargasso Sea Commission***

Governance of High Seas Ecosystems: Big Data & AI Workshop  
March 2nd 2022

# THE SARGASSO SEA

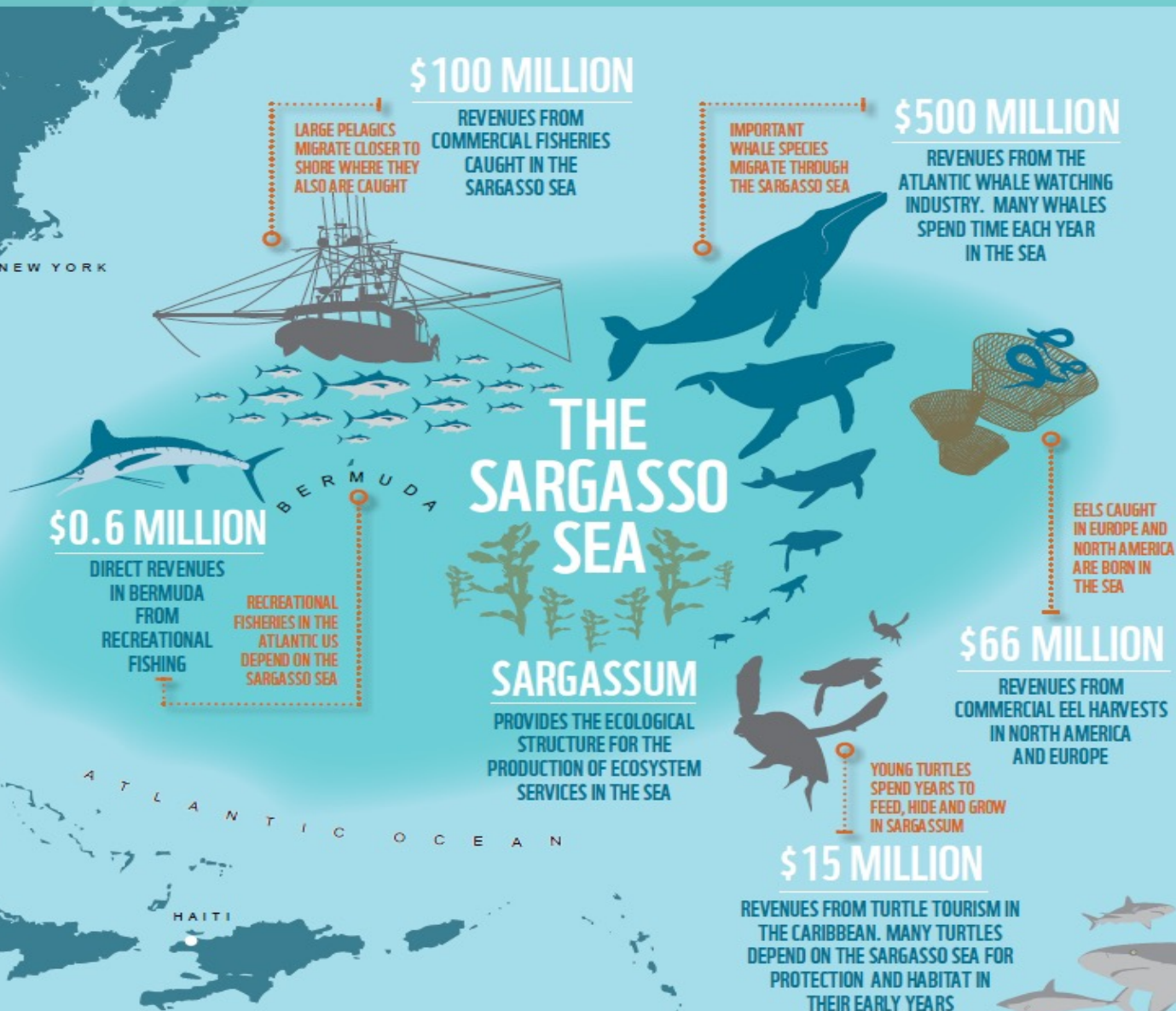
## A VITAL ECOSYSTEM OF GLOBAL IMPORTANCE

THE SARGASSO SEA CREATES AN ESSENTIAL HABITAT FOR WORLDWIDE SPECIES GLOBALLY, BUT WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THIS HIGH BIODIVERSE AND PRODUCTIVE AREA?

### THE STUDY

THE STUDY LINKS THE ECOLOGICAL HEALTH OF THE SARGASSO SEA TO RELEVANT ECONOMIC SECTORS USING EXISTING DATA. THIS INCLUDES ECOSYSTEM SERVICES THAT ARE ENJOYED DIRECTLY WITHIN THE SARGASSO SEA. THE HEALTH OF THE SARGASSO SEA PROVIDES A FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE SARGASSO SEA. SPECIES OF ECONOMIC INTEREST, SUCH AS EEL, BILLFISH, WHALES, TURTLES RELY ON THE SARGASSO SEA FOR SPAWNING, MATURATION, FEEDING, CRITICAL ROUTE FOR MIGRATION.

PENDLETON, L., F. KROWICKI, P. STROSSER, AND J. HALLETT-MURDOCH. ASSESSING THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN THE SARGASSO SEA. (NIR 14-05. DURHAM, NC: DUKE UNIVERSITY)



### UNQUANTIFIED BENEFITS

ADDITIONALLY, THE SARGASSO SEA SUPPORTS A LARGE NUMBER OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES THAT HAVE YET TO BE QUANTIFIED, INCLUDING:

#### ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

SARGASSUM CONTRIBUTES TO THE CREATION OF BEACHES AND SHORELINE PROTECTION, CARBON SEQUESTRATION, OXYGEN PRODUCTION, AND BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION



#### WILDLIFE

ENJOYED BY BIRD WATCHERS AND SEA LIFE VIEWED BY SCUBA DIVERS, SNORKELERS, AND OTHERS



#### ICONIC ORGANISMS

MORE THAN 100 SPECIES OF INVERTEBRATES, MORE THAN 280 SPECIES OF FISH, AND 23 SPECIES OF SEABIRD, INCLUDING MANY THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES



#### PASSIVE USE VALUES

INCLUDING THE EXISTENCE OF CHARISMATIC SPECIES AND RARE OR THREATENED SPECIES LIKE WHALES, TURTLES, SHARKS, AND EMBLEMATIC SPECIES (E.G., THE SARGASSUM ANGLERFISH) AS WELL AS POTENTIAL OPTION VALUES FOR ORGANISMS THAT ARE AS YET UNDISCOVERED. SARGASSUM PROVIDES PROTECTIVE HABITAT FOR YOUNG TURTLES AND SHARKS.

# *The Hamilton Declaration on Collaboration for the Conservation of the Sargasso Sea*

*(March 2014)*

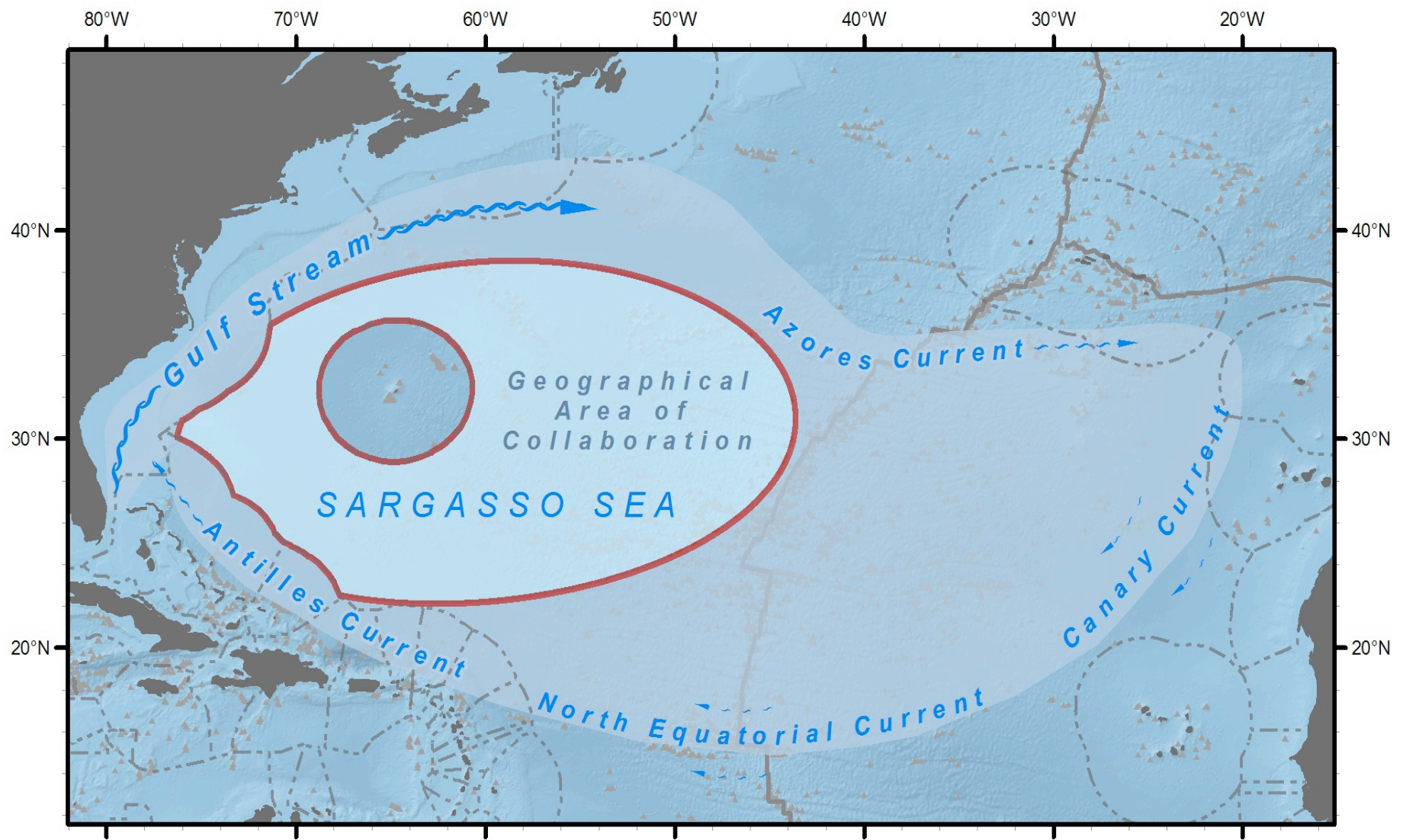







## ***Hamilton Declaration Signatories***

- **Azores**
- **Bahamas (2016)**
- **Bermuda**
- **British Virgin Islands (2016)**
- **Canada (2016)**
- **Cayman Islands (2017)**
- **Dominican Republic (2018)**
- **Monaco**
- **United Kingdom**
- **United States**
- **Netherlands, Sweden, South Africa,**
- **Turks and Caicos - Trinidad and Tobago unable to attend but supportive**

## ***Observer Organisations***

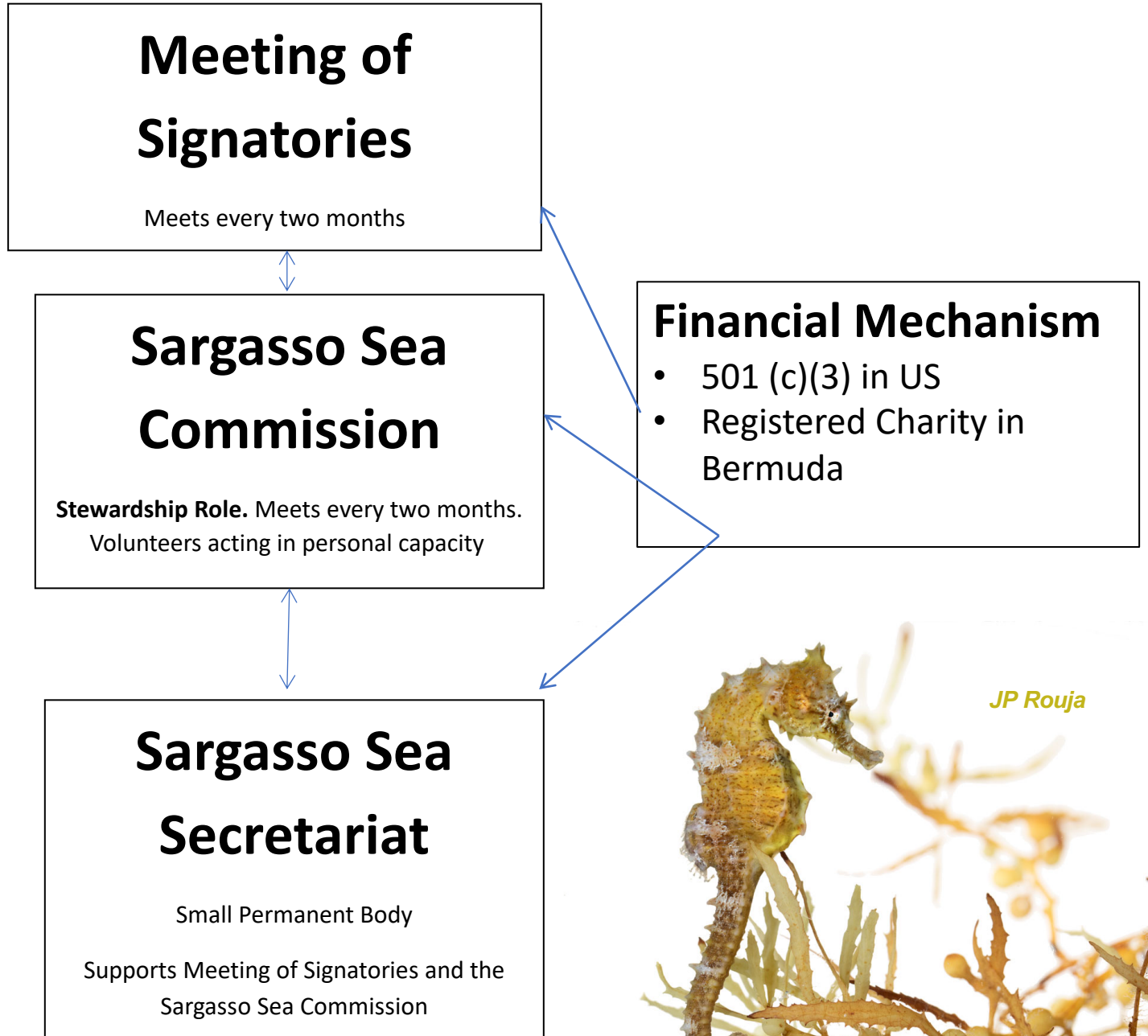
- **ISA - International Seabed Authority Secretariat**
- **OSPAR (former Executive Secretary)**
- **Convention on Migratory Species Secretariat**
- **IUCN**
- **Inter-American Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Sea Turtles**



-  Sargasso Sea Geographical Area of Collaboration
  -  North Atlantic Gyre
  -  Seamount
  -  Mid-Atlantic Ridge
  -  EEZ
- Duke MGEL*



# *Hamilton Declaration Structure*





**Dr. Tammy  
Warren**



**Prof.  
Howard Roe**



**Mrs.  
Rochelle  
Newbold**



**Prof.  
Stephen  
de Mora**



**Sen. Wilfred  
Moore**



**Mr. Mark  
Spalding**



**Dr. Ana  
Colaço**



**SARGASSO SEA  
COMMISSION**

Jason Arnold



# Collaborating partners

- *Air Centre*
- *Andrew Stevenson*
- *Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS)*
- *Bermuda Zoological Society*
- *Ciências – University of Lisboa*
- *Dalhousie University*
- *Duke University Marine Geospatial Ecology Laboratory*
- *Florida Atlantic University*
- *Global Fishing Watch*
- *Gallifrey Foundation*
- *Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI)*
- *Global Oceans*
- *Imperial College London*
- *Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)*
- *Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)*
- *International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC)*
- *International SeaKeepers Society*
- *International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (WCPA)*
- *Look Bermuda*
- *Mare (Portugal)*



- *Marviva*
- *Marine & Environmental Law Institute, Dalhousie University*
- *Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL)*
- *Mission Blue/Sylvia Earle Alliance*
- *Nekton/Code Blue Foundation*
- *Nonsuch Expeditions*
- *Optical Oceanography Lab, College of Marine Science, University of South Florida*
- *Ocean Foundation*
- *Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML)*
- *Sea Education Association*
- *The Ocean Foundation*
- *University of the Bahamas*
- *University of Brest (UBO)*
- *University of Exeter Global Systems Institute*
- *University of South Florida College of Marine Science*
- *University of Central Florida Marine Turtle Group*
- *University of Southern Mississippi, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory*
- *University of Edinburgh*
- *WWF-International*
- *World Commission on Protected Areas*





***Strengthening the stewardship of an economically and biologically significant high seas area –***

# ***The Sargasso Sea***

***Inception Workshop  
Per Zoom 15 December 2020***



**SARGASSO SEA  
COMMISSION**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic  
Commission



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# Key Components



- 4 year project for US \$3million
  - Child Project under FAO Common Ocean Program
  - UNDP Implementing /UNESCO IOC Executing agency
1. **An Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (EDA) for the entire Sargasso Sea Ecosystem providing a baseline for monitoring and adaptive management/stewardship of the Sargasso Sea.**
  2. **A road-map and budget for the adoption of an Ecosystem Based Approach to governance and conservation**
  3. **Strategic Action Programme defining the management or stewardship measures and associated priority actions**
  4. **Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation**



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR  
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL



Université de Bretagne Occidentale



## NOTE D'ENGAGEMENT PROJET

Contribuer à une gouvernance hybride pour protéger et gérer des aires remarquables en haute mer Océans Pacifique Est tropical et Atlantique Nord-Ouest



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FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR  
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL

# ***SARGADOM Project***

- **5 Year Project starting first quarter of 2021**
- **€3 million to three main partners:**
  - **Sargasso Sea Project Inc. € 961K**
  - **MarViva € 1,403k**
  - **Ocean University of Brest (OBO) €636k**
- **Partners: UBO and OFB; VIVA Trust and Central American Institutions; Sargasso Sea Commission and its signatory countries; GEF; Global Fishing Watch; NASA (Coverage project); MGEL; WMU; Imperial; BIOS; Edinburgh University; Others**

*to “contribute to hybrid governance to protect and manage two remarkable areas of the high seas: The Thermal Dome and the Sargasso Sea*



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*Welcome*

*Thanks for your attention ...*

